



# South Grand Chenier Hydrologic Restoration Project (ME-20)

## Project Status

**Approved Date:** 2002  
**Project Area:** 7,496 acres  
**Net Benefit After 20 Years:** 440 acres  
**Project Type:** Hydrologic Restoration

**Cost:** \$21 million  
**Status:** Engineering and Design

## Location

The project is located south of Grand Chenier in Cameron Parish, Louisiana, between Louisiana Highway 82 and Hog Bayou.

## Problems

The major problem in the Hog Bayou Unit is land loss caused by failed agricultural impoundments and pump-offs. Other problems include saltwater intrusion from the Mermentau Ship Channel construction and a gulf shoreline erosion rate of 40 feet per year. Over a period of 60 years, 9,230 acres (38% of the original marsh) was lost, with the greatest amount of land lost between 1956 and 1974.

The major contributors to land loss in the Hog Bayou Watershed are subsidence, compaction, and the oxidization of marsh soils in the former pump-offs and leveed agricultural areas between Hog Bayou and Highway 82. Large areas of marsh south of Highway 82 were "force drained" during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. Many of these same areas now consist of open water with very little wetland vegetation. The largest area of current loss is in a failed impoundment in the eastern portion of the project area (see "Area C" on map).



Looking west along the northern levee separating units "B" and "C."

## Restoration Strategy

The project's goals are to: 1) create 400 acres of emergent marsh and 2) nourish and enhance an additional 4,000 acres of emergent marsh with fresh water, nutrients, and sediments.

One approach to achieve the project's goals is to restore the Hog Bayou watershed hydrology through the use of dredged material to create two 200-acre cells that will impede water movement and saltwater intrusion in the eastern project area. Another approach the project will take is to reduce intermediate and brackish marsh loss (and hence, protect fish and wildlife wetland habitats) by introducing fresh water, sediment, and nutrients from two Mermentau River locations at a rate of approximately 125 cubic feet per second whenever the river is fresher than the project area marshes.

## Progress to Date

This project was selected for Phase I (engineering and design) funding at the January 2002 Breau Act Task Force meeting. It is included as part of Priority Project List 11.

*For more project information, please contact:*



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**Local Sponsor:**  
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